

The Practical Implications of the Components of Happiness: Ibn Sina's Innovations

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Abstract

Original Research



Happiness, as the ultimate goal of human life, encompasses a variety of internal and external components, each playing a distinct role in achieving this final aim. However, in individual and collective practice, conflicts often arise among these components, necessitating a form of prioritization or ranking. This ranking, in turn, requires a precise evaluation of the relationships between these components. Each component of happiness can either serve solely as a means to the ultimate goal, be considered an end in itself, or simultaneously function as both an intrinsic end and a means to other components. This framework provides a basis for determining appropriate actions to resolve practical conflicts, which may involve preserving or eliminating certain components. Ibn Sina introduces innovative perspectives on the concept of happiness that help distinguish between various types of components. Specifically, he replaces Aristotle's notion of "function" with "perfection," differentiates between the happiness of the soul and that of its faculties, and further separates the soul's happiness in its essence from its happiness in relation to the body. Based on this hierarchical system of perfections and happiness, which culminates in proximity to God and annihilation in Him, a criterion emerges for prioritizing conflicting components of happiness in practice and determining appropriate actions to address them.

Keywords

Ibn Sina, practical outcomes, ultimate goal, intrinsic goal, components of happiness

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